



**CHILDREN'S AID**  
**SOCIETY**

December 2009

**Our mission is to identify and provide services to improve the lives of children and their families.**

*All I Want for Christmas...*  
*by Bonnie Floro, Executive Director*

Working at a non-profit agency with many different programs housed in two older buildings is a constant adventure. Not a day goes by when there isn't something that breaks, gets used up, or wears out. As we look forward to the end of the year and try to keep our expenses down it seems like the list of things we need keeps getting longer. Whether it's a water heater, a new piece of playground equipment, an industrial can opener, or money to keep our programs going – you name it, we probably need it! So this Christmas I'll make a wish and send out this list. Maybe Santa will be generous this year.

Ten – conference room chairs  
Nine – gallons of paint  
Eight – inches of mulch  
Seven – volunteer painters  
Six – hands-free trash cans  
Five – Big Brothers Big Sisters match sponsors.....  
Four – boxes of floor tile  
Three – new carpets  
Two – new washers and dryers  
And one wonderful Christmas day for all of our children, families, and staff!



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### **Adoption News**

by Sarah Miller, Adoption Case Manager

November is National Adoption Month! At Children's Aid Society, we held an adoption information session on November 16. We provided information on private, international and SWAN adoptions. On November 21, we participated in the Candy Cane Carnival at the Nittany Mall in State College. This is an annual event to welcome Santa Claus. We shared information about our Adoption Program with interested families and met with other SWAN affiliates from the area.

Sarah, Rebekah, and Teresa recently attended a two-day, 3-5-7 Model training in Hollidaysburg, PA. This is a model for providing child prep services to the children that we serve who are waiting for their forever family, or who are placed with a family who will be formally adopting them or providing permanent care. The basis of this model is: the completion of 3 tasks—clarification, integration, and actualization; answering 5 conceptual questions—Who am I? What happened to me? Where am I going? How will I get there? When will I know I belong?; and the use of 7 critical skill elements—engagement, listening, truthfulness, validation, creating safe space, and recognizing hurt. All of these elements, if used effectively, will eventually assist the child in doing the work of reconciling losses, rebuilding relationships through the attachment process, and encouraging belongingness in permanency.

“You don't have to be perfect to be a perfect parent.”

--www.childwelfare.gov



There are many ways to help Children's Aid Society serve children and families: You may donate to a specific program, remember us in your will, or decide to offer an annual gift. We appreciate monetary donations or donations of your time in any form. Thank you for your support.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have enclosed \$1000 as a one-time Big Brothers Big Sisters match sponsor.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like to sponsor a Big Brothers Big Sisters match annually.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ as a one-time gift.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ as an annual gift.

\_\_\_\_\_ Please contact me about naming Children's Aid Society in my will.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like the funds to specifically benefit the \_\_\_\_\_ program.

\_\_\_\_\_ I would like more information on volunteering.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Children's Aid Society, 1008 South Second Street, Clearfield, PA 16830.

Phone: (814)765-2686



Remember to use GoodSearch.com as your Internet search engine and GoodShop.com as your online shopping mall for Children's Aid Society to earn a penny every time you search the Internet or shop online.



## BIG BROTHERS NEEDED!!!

In Clearfield County, there is a boy waiting for a Big Brother.

He wants someone to talk to, hang out with, play with and look up to. He wants to go fishing, toss a football and play Playstation. He wants to talk and be heard.

In the same amount of time it takes to watch a football game or shoot some pool, you could help build his confidence and self-esteem and give him a better chance at a positive future.

Volunteer for one of the most rewarding things you'll ever do: be a mentor for a child.

Contact Big Brothers Big Sisters of Clearfield County at 814-765-2687 or visit us online at [www.childaid.org](http://www.childaid.org) to learn how you can help him and the many other children just like him.



## We Know How to Cook a Turkey!

The holiday season is upon us with its many delicious smells and tastes. Many of our holiday traditions center around food and family, and having children help in the kitchen is a great way to make family memories. During our recent Food and Me unit and discussion of Thanksgiving, our PA Pre-K Counts students gave their recipes for how to cook a turkey. We hope you enjoy them!

“Cut it in half with scissors. Cook on the stove – 20 seconds. It’s done 7 o’clock 9. Put on table and eat it.”

“We mix it up with the salt and pepper and cheese. Put it in milk. That makes it hot. Put it in the oven. Then you put it on the table. Me cut it in half. Eat it and peas with dip.”

“You have to catch the turkey. You have to get the fur off. Cut his head off. Put him in a bowl. Put him in the oven. Cook 5 minutes. If you hear the ding-dong bell for the stove that means it’s done. Put it in dish. Then you’re gonna eat it.”

“We need turkey and a pan. Cook on stove. Cook 1 minute. You flip it. Cook it again. When done, it’s gonna look like turkey. Eat it.”

“Put it in a pot. Put some celery and cheese up top. You gonna stir it. Cook it for 5 minutes. Drop it on the counter top because it’s too hot on the stove. Sit it on table and cut it up. Put on plate. Eat it.”

“We buy food - macaroni and cheese, meatballs, and turkey. Put it in a pot. Then you take it out and put in oven. Cook 2 times, 10 more minutes. Because the turkeys almost done. It can snap. You stir it. You put on table when people come and eat it.”

“I would need peaches, bird wings, turkey. Put peaches and bird wings in the body. Put in pan with lid on. Cook 5 minutes. It’s done when the bell rings. You gotta set the bell too. Bag! Bowl! Eat! Goody, goody, goody!”

“We need turkey, some meat, and pepper. Cook with a pan. Cook it with ‘gredients’. Cook on stove for 55 minutes. Stop the stove. Put on plate. Eat it.”

“You need turkey. You need to cook it. Put in oven, like for 5 minutes as soon as the red thing pops out you just take it out. Take out of oven. You put it on something. You have Thanksgiving and eat it.”

If you are interested in receiving our newsletter by email or if your address has changed, please contact Amanda via email at [amandac@childaid.org](mailto:amandac@childaid.org)

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
***Bowl For Kids' Sake 2010***

**Mo Valley Super Bowl  
“Glow Bowl”  
Saturday: March 27, 2010**

**DuBois Lanes  
Sunday: April 11, 2010**

**Clearfield Lanes  
Sunday: April 25, 2010**

You can donate to  
Children’s Aid  
Society through the  
Clearfield  
Community  
Charitable  
Foundation.

Call (814) 765-7682  
for more  
information.

## How to Talk to Your Spouse about Marriage Education

Tori Barger, Healthy Marriage Program Manager

One common myth we hear from couples all the time in the Healthy Marriage Program is “we don’t have a bad marriage so that program’s not for us.” Marriage education isn’t about fixing bad marriages or providing therapy to couples. It IS about strengthening your marriage and making it a top priority.

Asking your partner to attend a relationship education workshop might suggest that you think something is wrong or that you’re not happy in your relationship, even if that’s not the case. Marriage and relationship education is a fantastic support for couples who are looking to improve an already good relationship or couples who may be struggling with a few problems. The following tips can help you start your discussion about marriage education with your partner.

### 1. Use “I” Statements

*Discuss the issue in ways that are focused mostly on you and how you currently feel, and how you expect to benefit from marriage education. Starting your sentences with phrases like “It seems to me...” “I feel (or think, or want)...” or “This will help me because...” will help make the conversation less threatening to your partner.*

### 2. Explain Marriage Education

*Make sure you relay to your partner what marriage education is and is not. For example, marriage education will teach you the skills to:*

- *Communicate effectively*
- *Resolve conflict productively*
- *Discuss expectations*
- *Work together as a team*
- *Have fun together*
- *Strengthen your trust and commitment*

*Assure your partner that marriage education will not be like group therapy or force you to “air your dirty laundry” in public. It is for couples who want to strengthen their marriage. Discuss with your partner your list of reasons for seeking marriage education and how you think it will benefit your relationship. Share with your partner concerns about communication barriers, financial issues causing strain on your relationship, how to increase intimacy and romance, or an ongoing issue in your relationship.*

### 3. Be Open to Your Partner’s Thoughts and Feelings

*After you’ve explained your list of reasons for seeking marriage education, give your partner time to share his or her thoughts. Realize that even though you’ve done some research and know what you want out of marriage education, your partner might not have considered the need, or might see things differently. Be open and willing to compromise based on his or her wants. Look at information on The Healthy Marriage Program together and make a decision as a team. Find an option that fits your schedule, location and setting. Look at [www.childaid.org](http://www.childaid.org), email [healthymarriage@childaid.org](mailto:healthymarriage@childaid.org) or call us for more information about our Healthy Marriage Program!*

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## **Healthy Marriage Program Upcoming Events:**

### **Weekend Retreat** – February 7 & 8 at the Day’s Inn in Clearfield

Our program in a weekend format for those that can’t commit to the longer weekly schedule.

### **National Marriage Week** – February 7<sup>th</sup> through 14<sup>th</sup>

A special week to celebrate Marriage! Look for special events in the community, articles and more!

### **New series of Within Our Reach Classes begins in March!**

DuBois Class – Saturday mornings @ ABBA’s Coffee House  
Clearfield Class – Thursday evenings @ the Salvation Army



## 10 Ways to Reduce Kids' Stress

If parents are stressed at Christmas, their children will pick up those feelings of holiday anxiety. These holiday stress management tips will help both parents and children feel less stress - because helping kids cope with holiday stress is the best way to enjoy Christmas!

1. Take children out of the spotlight during Christmas plays or performances at relatives' homes. Helping children cope with holiday stress involves knowing their personalities and limits.
2. Combine parties and get-togethers to reduce the time you spend partying. For instance, invite your aunt to a kids' Christmas party.
3. Stick with the routine as much as possible. Keep stressful holiday shopping and eating out to a minimum; start preparing for Christmas early to avoid holiday anxiety.
4. Ask your children what makes them feel better. Do they wind down with music, reading, spending time with you or playing with siblings? To help children calm down at Christmas, encourage them to do what they love.
5. Make sure your children eat nutritious foods, drink lots of water, and get exercise. Reducing kids' holiday stress looks similar to minimizing your own holiday anxiety.
6. Talk to your children about traditions and spirituality. If you believe in Christ, focus on the real meaning of Christmas - and trusting God. If you have traditions, explain why they've stayed in your family.
7. Bring a favorite blanket or stuffed animal if you're staying with family over the holidays. A bit of home will reduce your child's holiday anxiety.
8. Cope with your own holiday anxiety. The less Christmas stress you feel, the more relaxed your children will be.
9. Volunteer at a food bank, kids' hospital or community center. Find ways to give to your community; volunteering often relieves feelings of holiday anxiety.
10. Lighten the mood with funny movies, toboggan afternoons and cozy chats with hot chocolate.

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As our national day of THANKSGIVING approaches this year, I find myself filled with a different set of things to be thankful for than in past years. Of course, the normal sense of gratitude for my family and friends is there, but this year I am especially thankful to have a job and the ability to provide for my family. Across our entire country there are thousands of people who were able to say this same thing last year but cannot in 2009.

In addition to the economic challenges our nation is facing, here in Pennsylvania we had the added challenge of several months without a state budget. That had a huge impact on many small businesses across the state, especially child care centers. While most child care centers were able to continue to operate, sadly there were many that had to close due to the lack of state funds. Hopefully, some of those have been able to reopen but I am sure that there are still hundreds of people who made an impact in the early childhood field each day, who will not be celebrating this holiday season with the children who were so much a part of their lives.

This year I am especially thankful because even though Children's Aid Society child care center faced many challenges in 2009, we are still here providing care to those families who want and need our services. I know that it will take time for the center to operate at the size that it was one short year ago, but I am encouraged that we weathered such a difficult year. I want to extend a sincere *THANK YOU* to all our current families for standing beside us throughout this past year. Because of you, those of us who come to the center each day to teach, nurture and play with your children get to celebrate the upcoming holiday season with those special children.

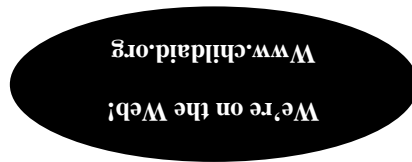
Best wishes for a joyous holiday season,  
 Laura Deardorff, Child Care Director

It's the time of year where our minds ponder the things that we are grateful for. Children's Aid Society is overflowing with blessings:

- \* New staff that brings positive energy and vigor: Welcome to Rebekah McClure, Shannon Kassab, Amber Kramer, Kim Sass, Wilma Riehl, Valerie Swales & Sarah Miller!
- \* Board of Directors that guide us with wisdom and compassion.
- \* Excellent services by our staff in the face of time, personnel and funding shortfalls.
- \* The opportunity to be a conduit for those that want to mentor children and those that want a positive role model for their children.
- \* Supporters that give money to fill in the gaps left between grants and government funding; give us things we need, and give time to help us with our many projects and programs.
- \* The opportunity to help parents become the parent they want to be.
- \* The chance to provide couples with relationship-building skills.
- \* The opportunity to help those that want to adopt and children that want a forever home.
- \* Helping children be better prepared for kindergarten.
- \* Parents who entrust us to provide care for their children.

Our biggest blessing by far is being surrounded by children each day! With them in mind we strive to fulfill our mission of providing services to improve the lives of children and families in Clearfield County.

- Julie Kennedy, Assistant Director



Change Service Requested

A United Way Agency

Clearfield, PA 16830

1004-1008 South Second Street

Children's Aid Society



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